

*Gen 8. 5.*

The Religious Education of Poor  
Children Recommended,  
IN A

# SERMON

Preach'd in the Parish Church of  
St. SEPULCHRES

June 5. 1707.

BEING  
*Thursday in Whitson-Week,*  
AT THE  
ANNIVERSARY MEETING  
OF THE

Gentlemen concerned in Promoting the  
CHARITY-SCHOOLS lately  
Erected in the Cities of *London* and *West-  
minster*: And of the *Poor Children Educated*  
in the said SCHOOLS,

In Number about Three Thousand.

*Publifh'd at the Request of many Persons concern'd in this Charity.*

By FRANCIS GASTRELL, D.D.  
Canon of Christ-Church, and Preacher to the  
Honourable Society of *Lincolns Inn.*

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St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1707.



*Fine Money*

## Advertisement.

**A**N Account of Charity-Schools lately Erected in *England, Wales and Ireland*: With the Benefactions thereto; and of the Methods whereby they were set up and are govern'd. Also a Proposal for Enlarging their Number, and adding some Work to the Childrens Learning, thereby to render their Education more useful to the Publick. The Sixth Edition, with large Additions. Printed and Sold by J. Downing in *Bartholomew-Close near West-Smithfield.*

## Psal. CXLVII. Ver. 12, 13.

*Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem : Praise thy God, O Sion. For he hath strengthened the Bars of thy Gates : He hath blessed thy Children within thee.*

THESE Words of the Psalmist are suppos'd by Interpreters to refer to the Time of Nehemiah ; when the Children of Israel were returned from their long Captivity into their own Land : When the Temple of the Lord was rebuilt, and the Walls of Jerusalem repair'd ; And when the People, the Priests, and the Levites, and all they that had separated themselves from the Filthiness of the Heathen unto the Law of God, they, their Wives, their Sons and their Daughters, had entred into a Curse, and an Oath, and made a Covenant, to observe and do all the Commandments of the Lord their God, and his Judgments, and his Statutes.

Great and wonderful were the Blessings which gave Occasion to the Author of this Psalm to call upon all his Brethren to join with him in praising and magnifying the Lord : But that which seems most to have raised his Devotion, was the Reformation of Religion which was begun among them, the solemn Ingagement by which they had obliged themselves to serve the Lord ; not only the Men and the Women, but their Sons and their Daughters, and all that could hear the Law, which was read to them, with Understanding.

This it was that gave Strength and Security both to Jerusalem and Sion, both to the Nation and Church of the Jews. And all their outward Peace and Prosperity, their present and their future Happiness did in a great Measure depend on God's thus Blessing their Children within them ; when they were all instructed in the Law of God ; and had not only bound themselves to observe it, but had taken the most effectual Care they could, to ingage their Posterity also to tread in their Steps, that the Generation to come should know the Commandments of God, and keep them, even the Children

*which should be born ; who should arise and declare them to their Children.*

And thus, in like manner, we of this Kingdom, who have lately received many great and signal Mercies from the Hands of God, are more especially obliged to praise him for inspiring us with such Zeal and Concern for his Service, as now appears in the Methods that are taken to educate poor Children ; and for the wonderful Success which he hath given to this glorious Work.

Our *Jerusalem* is rebuilt, and the Building is more stately and magnificent than before ; and tho' the sound of War is heard from far, yet doth she not smart under the worst effects of it at home : *Peace is within her Walls, and Prosperity within her Palaces :* But that which strengthens the *Bars of her Gates*, that whereby she is exalted and made a defenced City, is this *Blessing of God upon her Children within her.*

Our Churches also are Rebuilt, and the *Great Temple* is almost finished ; and no proper Ornaments are wanting to beautifie the *House of the Lord* : But that which makes the *Glory of these latter Churches greater than the Glory of the former*, is, that they are filled, at these charitable Solemnities, with those that *worship God in the Beauty of Holiness.*

God hath bleſſ'd us with frequent Victories over our Enemies Abroad ; we are made stronger at Home by the Union of Two Nations long divided in their Interests ; and we have a near Prospect of enjoying all the Temporal Prosperity that Peace can give us. But unless we *return unto the Lord our God, and make a sure Covenant with him, to observe and do all his Commandments, his Statutes and his Judgments*, we may be never the better for all these glorious things which God hath done for us. Victory and Success may serve only to nourish our Pride ; Peace and Plenty may administer Occasions to Sloth and Luxury ; when we are safe from foreign Enemies, we may be disposed to discharge our Fury upon one another ; and when Trouble and Affliction are remov'd far from us, we may give way more easily to all manner of Vice and Filthiness : This, I say, may probably be our Case, except Religion come in to sanctifie all these outward Blessings to us, and to direct us to a proper Use of them.

It is Righteousness alone that can support and exalt a Nation. The only sure Way of rendering a People truly happy, is to make them truly Religious. And the most likely Method that can be taken to raise a new Spirit of Piety where it was decaying, is by an early and careful Instruction of our Children in the Fear of God, and in the Ways of Virtue and Holiness.

Great Reason therefore have we to praise God, that He hath put it into the Hearis of some of his faithful Servants, to set on foot such a charitable Design as this before us, of Educating the Children of the Poor: The very Beginning of which gives us a just Title to the Favour of God, and which, in the Progres of it, is like to produce more happy Consequences both to our Jerusalem and our Sion, than all the Temporal Blessings we enjoy, or expect.

Now, in order to raise in you a due Thankfulness to Almighty God; to do Justice to those who have had the chief Hand in forming and promoting this good Design; and to stir up other Persons to contribute their Endeavours for the Carrying on, and advancing the Work, which hath been so prosperously begun; it will be very proper, at this time, to take as full a View as we can of the Charity, by considering,

*First, The Nature.* And,

*Secondly, The Influence and Extent of it.*

1. As to the *Nature* of this Charity: It is purely Religious; the whole Aim of it being to give those Persons, to whom it is extended, a just Account of the Being and Providence of God, and of the End and Duty of Man; and to strengthen and confirm them in the Belief, and Love, and Practice of what they are taught. And the Methods that are here taken, are the most proper and effectual for that Purpose.

*That the Soul shold be without Knowledge, we are sure, is not good.* And what Knowledge can be so useful to us as that of Virtue and Happiness? What better Beginning can there be of Wisdom, than the Fear of the Lord? And when can this Wisdom find a more easie Entrance into the Soul, than in the days of our Youth?

This is certainly the best Season for all manner of Learning and Instruction, and the most proper Seed-time of Religion. Whatever grows up first in our

Minds will, with due Care and Culture, be likely to take the deepest Root, and produce the largest Encrease. But Religion must have the Advantage of being planted first, or else the Soil may be indisposed to receive it ; *The Ground* may prove stony, or full of Thorns, and the Seed that then falls upon it may wither away and be choked, without bringing forth Fruit.

There are in all of us some natural Inclinations to Good as well as to Evil ; and if these are improved, and confirmed into Habits before the other have *Dominion over us*, they will become the commanding Principles of our Minds, and keep under the *Power of Sin in our mortal Bodies*.

In the present State of our Corruption, *the Flesh and the Spirit* are always warring one against the other : But the Contest between them is never so unequally managed as in the Years of Infancy and Youth, when the Impressions of Sense are strongest, and the Powers of the Mind least able to resist them. This is then the most proper time to enlighten and fortifie the Understanding, and to curb and restrain all our sensual Appetites and Desires ; which being well broken and tamed at the first, will afterwards submit themselves, without much Struggle, to the Guidance of Reason.

This is the most helpless State of our *Souls* as well as of our *Bodies*. And now therefore it is, that we have most need of the Care and Assistance of others, to *shew us the way of Life* ; to *nourish us up in the Words of sound Doctrine and Wisdom* ; to bend and fashion our Minds to Virtue ; and to keep them straight and steady, till we come to the full Stature of our Understandings, and are able to guide and conduct our selves.

How many Persons, well disposed by Nature, have been engaged in vicious Courses before they had learned to distinguish between *Good and Evil*, between *Inclination and Reason* ? How many poor ignorant Souls have went along with the *Multitude* in the *broad Way to Destruction*, only because they were destitute of a Guide, by whose charitable Direction they might easily have been put into the *narrow but less trodden Way that leads to Life Eternal* ?

How many other Instances do we meet with, of such as lament the Misfortune of a vicious Education, when

when it is too late to retrieve it? Such as are sensible of their *Bondage* to Sin and *Satan*, when they have neither Strength nor Resolution enough to set themselves free?

And how wretched is the Condition of those, who being resolved to break through all the Difficulties into which a misguided and ill-spent Youth hath plunged them, are forc'd to employ the latter part of their Lives in unlearning and undoing whatever they have learnt and done in the former? Who are at more Pains to correct one vicious Habit, than was requisite at first to confirm them in all manner of Virtue? and who have no other Way left of being *saved* but by *Fire*; by all the Hardship and Pain that the continual Remorse of their Consciences and the Importunity of their Appetites can give them?

What a happy State then must they be in, who, when they come to take upon them the Government of themselves, have the Pleasure to find their Understandings replenish'd with proper Knowledge, their Passions tractable and obedient to Reason, and the whole State of their Souls regular and orderly? What an Ease and Comfort must it be to them to perceive, that all things have been so well managed and conducted for them, during their Minority, that they have nothing more to do but to go on in the Path which lies plain before them, without either turning to the right Hand or to the left.

This is the most natural and most likely Effect of a Religious Education: And this is the chief Aim and Design of this charitable Institution, to infuse the true Principles of Religion and Virtue into the Minds of those Children, who, for want of such a particular Care, would, in all probability, have been bred up in gross Ignorance, and abandon'd to all the vicious Consequences of it.

But Knowledge alone, tho' never so well and carefully instilled, is not sufficient to preserve us in our Youth, from all the Temptations that then beset us; for whatever Diligence be used in *sowing the good Seed*, the *Enemy*, who is always at hand, will be equally busie in scattering the *Tares* among it; as well knowing of what Importance it is to him to have his Share in *the first Fruits of the Increase*.

The best Way then to render our Knowledge fruitful in good Works is, to guard and fence it in from those three main Springs of Corruption and Vice, *Want, Idleness, and Ill-Examples.* And that is particularly provided for in the Way of Education we are now considering.

Were poor Children never so well instructed in the saving Truths of the Gospel, yet the meanness of their Condition will necessitate them to be careful about so many other things, that they will have but little Leisure and less Inclination to mind the one thing needful : tho' they understand their Duty to God and their Neighbour, yet when they have not Food convenient for them ; when their Appetites are craving, and the Demands of Nature peremptory, they will be tempted to steal, and take the Name of God in vain : When Poverty comes upon them like an armed Man, it must be no ordinary Degree of Virtue that can enable them to hold fast their Integrity, and not part with their Innocence for a Morsel of Bread.

Here therefore, not only the Ignorant are instructed, but the Poor are also relieved : And not only relieved for the present, so that they are at Liberty to attend to the Words of Instruction without Carefulness and Distraction ; but put also into a Condition of supporting themselves afterwards ; by being taught and exercised in all sorts of honest Labour. By which Means they are preserved from the greatest Danger incident to humane Nature, that of Idleness.

What was inflicted upon Man for the Punishment of his first Transgression; [that in the Sweat of his Face he should eat Bread] is now become the most likely Means of preserving us from all other Sin. For our Souls are as active and inquisitive as ever, and must be always employ'd one way or other ; and therefore, if we do not constantly find some proper Busines for them, The Thoughts and Imaginations of our Hearts will be only Evil continually.

I went by the Field of the Slothful (saith the Wiseman) and lo it was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered the Face thereof, and the Stone Wall thereof was broken down. And just such shall we find the Condition of his Soul, over-run with Vice and Error, and lying open and

and exposed on all Sides to Temptation. But Industry fixes the Mind, and keeps it clear and free from all loose Thoughts and wandring Desires ; and guards us every way against the Attacks of our spiritual Enemy.

It is by *Labour* that we are furnished with all the Necessaries and Advantages of this Life : And I doubt not but if we consider the Matter right, it will be found, that our being ingaged in some Business and Employment conduces as much to our *Eternal* as to our *Temporal* Welfare. For this I take to be the true Reason why it is so hard for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God ; because, being exempted from all the Toil and Care of Life, he is apt to enter too far into the Pleasures of it, and to *say to his Soul, Soul, take thine Ease, and enjoy the good things before thee* ; whereas our Portion here is Labour and Exercise, not Injoyment.

The Businels of our Salvation is a great Work ; which cannot be effected without Diligence, and Zeal, and earnest Contention ; but he who is unacquainted with Labour, He that hath not been accustomed to any other *Travel under the Sun*, will scarce take the Pains that is required towards *working out his Salvation, and making his Calling and Election sure*.

Next to Idleness, nothing bath so pernicious an Influence upon us as *Ill-Examples*. Sin, as well as Knowledge, is most of it owing to Tradition ; for as no Body would know much of himself, were there not others before him more learned to instruct him ; so neither wou'd any Man, that had only the Bent of his own Nature to guide him, find out much Evil, had he not the Examples of some that were more wicked than himself to pervert his Goings, and to lead him into the Paths of Sin : But so curious are we to know, and so quick to apprehend, and so ready to follow that which is Evil, that a few Instructors in Wickedness are sufficient to corrupt all those who are not well establish'd in contrary Notions and Methods of Practice.

Great therefore is the Benefit of such an Education as this, where Children are not only bred up for several Years under the Eye and Direction of discreet Persons, who are always *shewing them what is good*, and are never seen to depart from their own *Lessons* ; but where, by learning the same Rules, and practising the same Duties

Duties all together, their Minds are more easily bent the same Way; and they are, by a mutual Emulation, excited, not only to imitate, but to excel one another. And when every one of them hath so much innocent Company to converse with in their Schools, the loose Examples they meet with, out of them, will not be so apt either to please or infect them.

Such is the Nature and Constitution of this Charity: Let us now consider the *Influence* and *Extent* of it.

When we survey the Numbers of Children thus Educated; when we see the Charity continually growing and spreading it self, not only by a constant Succession of fresh Supplies to the Fountains already opened, but by the rise of new Springs; what a noble Prospect does this afford of the Increase of Virtue and Religion among us, to have so many Persons daily added to the Church of God, by being put into the right Way of Salvation? What a Pleasure would it be to those Holy Persons, who are now very Jealous for the Lord God of Hosts, at a time when it seems to them, that *all Men are gone astray and have forsaken the Covenant of God*, and that *they only are left to support his true Worship*: What a Pleasure, I say, would it be to such as these to behold at once, more than *seven thousand that have not bowed their Knees unto Baal*; that have not polluted themselves with the wicked Principles and vicious Customs of the present Age?

*This is a  
rash unsafe,  
youth in danger  
false; for, one  
of their chief  
employment  
is the concur-  
re of youth.*

But this is the narrowest View we can take of the Design. For these Schools are not like the *Popish Monasteries*, and other Places of religious Retirement; those standing Pools of Charity, which, if they do not stink and grow corrupt, yet, being pent up within narrow Bounds, carry no Refreshment or Fruitfulness to other Parts. These are pure and wholesome Streams, which are always running, and dispersing themselves into different Channels, and by that Means, communicating their Virtues to all the dry and barren Parts of the Land.

The Children that are here educated, will afterwards be distributed into many Families; they will be entred into several publick Societies, and by reason of their various Employments, and the different Success that may attend their Labours, they will come, in time, to

mix

mix in most of the Business and Conversation of the World ; and consequently, they will have many Opportunities of giving publick Proofs of their virtuous Behaviour, honest and upright Dealing, and religious Disposition towards God : By which Means, as it may reasonably be hoped, many of those, who see their good Works, will not only glorifie their Heavenly Father, but will be stirred up to imitate their good Example, by endeavouring to bring forth Fruit of the same kind.

Many likewise will be apt to enquire, whence these Persons had all their Knowledge and Virtue ; and when they had traced them to their true Source, they will, in all likelihood, be disposed to encourage such a Way of Education as hath produced so many faithful Servants, honest Traders, useful Subjects of the State, and sincere Members of God's Church.

Nor will the Influence of this Charity stop here. These poor Children will, many of them, hereafter be placed at the Head of distinct Families : And then the just Sense they have of the Advantages of their own Education, will engage them to breed up their Children and Servants, and all such to whom their Advice and Direction extends, in the same pious and useful Manner. They will endeavour to fix in them betimes those Principles of Religion, which, from sure Experience, they know will best fit them for every Condition of Life here, and give them the most comfortable Expectations of a better State. They will likewise, according to the Skill they have attained, be contriving Ways to employ even those who do not belong to them in some proper Business ; as being well assured that, next to Religion, nothing can be more beneficial to the Bodies and Souls of Men, to private Families, and publick Communities, than a general and early Application of Persons to Labour. And if God shall be pleased to bless any of them with Riches, (as Piety and Industry always give the best Title to a Competency, and often prove the best Means of attaining Abundance) what Advantages may the World justly expect to reap from those, who are thoroughly convinced, that they cannot better express their Gratitude to God, and their Benefactors ; or do a greater Service to Religion and their Country, than by contributing bountifully to this Charity ? Thus

Thus doth their Light shine before Men ; and as none of it is hid under a Bushel, where they live ; so neither is it all extinguished when they die : But their Piety and good Works shall survive them, not only in the Memory of Men, but in a righteous posterity, who shall approve their Sayings, and follow their Examples, and deliver them both down to their Childrens Children.

But to take the Dimensions of this Charity another Way : As the Number of Children which partake of it is very great, so is likewise those of the Contributors, who supply and feed it. And how can it be supposed that those, who so far approve the Design, as to give largely towards the Instruction of other Peoples Children, should be less solicitous for the Education of their own ?

They will be often enquiring how their well-meant Bounty hath been employ'd, and what Fruits it hath produced ? They will be pleased to see Plants of their own setting and watering, thrive and flourish : This will affect their Minds continually with a deep Sense of the great Advantages which attend a Religious Education ; and will excite them to take Care that their own Children are not worse instructed and worse disposed than the Children of the Poor.

And who can be more proper and effectual Advocates for this Charity ; who are more like to use their utmost Indeavours to raise up new Benefactors, than those, who, by contributing themselves, have had the best Opportunities of observing how wisely the whole Design is conducted, and what mighty Success hath already attended it ?

Neither is it improper here to mention the Number of those who are not only creditably maintain'd, but usefully employed in the several Parts of Instruction necessary for these Children ; a constant Succession of Persons well-inclined and well qualified to educate Youth, being a Blessing of invaluable Consequence both to Church and State.

Thus does it appear how far the Influence of this Charity is like to reach, if we take a view only of those who are immediately concern'd in it. Let us in the next Place consider, in what Manner those who look on may probably be affected with it.

Now

Now the publick Proceſſions of these Children, with all the other Methods made uſe of by thoſe who are chiefly intruſted with the Care of Propagating Christian Knowledge this way, muſt needs excite the Curioſity of all ſorts of Persons; and there are very few, I believe, ſo loſt to all Sense of Goodneſs, as not to be pleaſed with ſuch an unaffeeted Appearance of Religion as This: Several may be induc'd from hence to entertain more ſerious Thoughts of God and Religion than they had before; and whoever is ready to diſtribuſe, or willing to communicate, will hardly be able to paſs by ſo proper an Occaſion of doing Good.

It was the Saying of a Learned Heathen, That *If Virtue could be rendred visible, it would attract the Eyes and charm the Minds of all Beholders.* The neareſt Images we now have of it, are ſome Examples of Persons eminent for virtuous and worthy Actions; but theſe being few and rare, and the beſt of them tarniſhed with a Mixture of Vice and Paſſion, cannot ſtrike the Mind ſo forcibly, as ſuch an united Combination of Children, all in their native Innocence and Simplici‐ty, advaſing on together in the Ways of Piety and Virtue, and like a regular well-disciplin'd Army, per‐forming all the Duties of the ſpiritual Warfare, with exact Order and Obedience. And a mere ſensible, more beautiful Repreſentation of our moſt Holy Religion, there cannot well be, excepting only the *Armies which are in Heaven, that follow the Lamb upon white Horses, clothed in fine Linen, white and clean.*

But the Charity I am now recommending, doth not conſiſt in Shew and Appearance only; for the more nearly we look into it, and the ſtricteſt Account we take of the whole Proceſſ of this Affair, the more we ſhall be convinced, that, of all the Ways of Exerciſing that moſt excellent Gift of Charity, this is certainly the truеſt and moſt unexceptionable, both as to the End aimed at, and the Methods taken to compaſſ it.

For wherein can we employ our ſelves more to the Advantage of our poor Brethren, than by Inſtructing them in ſuch Things as belong to their Peace and Salva‐tion; by providing Food and Raiment convenient for them; and by fitting them for honest Callings and Em‐ployments, where they may work with their Hands the Thing

*Thing which is good, that so they may be able to support themselves and their Families, and may have to give to him that needeth?* And when can we shew this Kindness to them more properly, than at a time when they are least able to take this Care of themselves; when they are best disposed to receive Benefit from the Assistance of others; and when all our Endeavours of this kind are like to be attended with the greatest Success? To which I may add, that nothing can contribute more to render every Branch and Part of this Charity effectual, than the carrying them all on together at the same time, with equal Care and Application.

And that the whole Work is thus duly and carefully managed, we have sufficient reason to be satisfied from hence: That whatever is given towards it is freely bestowed by *everyone whose Heart stirred him up, and every one whom his Spirit made willing:* That there are no other Managers but what are likewise Contributors; and that the Benefactors are always living to take Care of their own Charity, and to see it justly and usefully laid out.

What may we not then expect from a Charity of this Nature, which in so short a Time, and in an Age which seemed so indisposed to good Works, hath gained so much Ground? And who will undertake to set Bounds to the Progress of Religion from these blessed Beginnings?

There are (as it appears to me) many promising Signs and Tokens of a new Face of Things coming on in the World; and Christianity seems to be reviving again by the same Steps and Methods by which it was first published. For the Kingdom of Christ does now, as it did then, chiefly consist of Children; and *out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings hath God again ordained Strength:* It was then one of the chief Marks of Christ's being the true *Messias,* That *the poor had the Gospel preached unto them:* And there are those, we see, who even now think it the best Way of approving themselves true Disciples of Christ, by Instructing the Children of the Poor, and removing as well the Spiritual as the Corporal Wants under which they labour. *Christ came, not only to give Knowledge of Salvation to his own People, but Light also to all them that sit in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death.*

**Death.** And we hope God will in like manner bless the Endeavours that are now used to propagate the Christian Religion in Foreign Parts as well as here at home ; to enlighten the Heathen, and carry them the glad Tydings of the Gospel, as well as to Instruct and Reform such as are called by the Name of Christ. And some Hopes we may conceive, that a general Reformation is really going forward, and will, in God's good Time, have its due Effect ; that the Devil seems to be let loose again, and to be come down among us in great Wrath, as before in our Saviour's Time ; tho', God be thanked, he never had weaker Instruments to carry on his Work : The present Enemies of Christ and his Gospel being Men of the worst Characters and meanest Talents that ever undertook to support so Defenceless a Cause. The subtlest and most powerful Adversary that Christianity ever had, was He who used his utmost Efforts to hinder Children from being Instructed in the Principles of that Religion : But the same God who disappointed that Device in the former Ages of the Gospel, when it was most likely to succeed, having now also been pleased to prosper the contrary Counsels which are taken for advancing the Kingdom of his Son ; we have good reason to hope and believe, that the Church which shall be built upon these new Foundations, shall be so firmly established, that the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against it.

And now having laid before you this true, tho' short Account of the Nature and Extent of the Charity, there will be no occasion for other Arguments to excite and encourage Persons to join together in promoting a Work so reasonable in it self, so universally approved by Men, and so mightily blessed by God with Success.

There are very few, I believe, to be found so intent upon the present Enjoyments of Life, as not to have some regard for Posterity ; and very few there are either so ignorant or so profligate themselves, as not to desire to have their Children well improv'd, both in Knowledge and Virtue : And therefore, since the only Persons that can be supposed either to dislike or obstruct this Design, are such as have no Concern at all for Posterity, and no regard for Religion : It is to be hoped, that the Generality of all sorts of People, even those

that

that are impatient of Instruction and Reformation themselves, will, according to their several Opportunities and Abilities, chearfully and generously contribute, what in them lies, to make the next Generation wiser, and more virtuous than this.

All that I shall add further upon this Subject is, that this seems to be in divers respects, the most favourable Season we can have for carrying on such a Work. For when can it be more likely to thrive, than in the Reign of a QUEEN, who is so bright an Example of Piety and Goodness Her self; so avowed a Promoter of all Designs of this Nature; and who hath so Bountifully contributed to the Maintenance of the poor Labourers in God's Vineyard, in order to encourage them in the Work of the Lord? And when, after a long War, God shall be pleased to give us the Blessings of Peace; How can we offer a more proper Peace-Offering for a Thanksgiving unto the Lord, than by presenting unto Him our Children, a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to the Lord? Which way can we make a better Atonement to God for the Sins which the Liberties of War may have brought in, than by using our utmost Endeavours to restore the Reverence and Obedience due to the Holy Laws of the Prince of Peace, Christ Jesus? And when can we have more Leisure, or more Ability to build up our selves and our Families to an Holy Temple in the Lord, than when God hath given us Rest on every side, so that there is neither Adversary nor evil Occurrent?

May God be pleased to strengthen the Hands, and encrease the Zeal of such as labour in any of those good Works, which tend to the Advancement of his Glory. And may he ever-more defend and protect his Church, so that the Boar out of the Wood may not wast it, nor the wild Beast of the Field devour it. Behold, O Lord, and visit this Vine, which thy Right-Hand hath planted; prepare room for it, and cause it to take deep Root, that it may fill the Land; that the Hills may be cover'd with the Shadow of it, and the Boughs thereof may be like the goodly Cedars; that she may send out her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Branches unto the River. Let thy Hand more especially support the Branch which thou hast made strong for thy self: And let these tender Plants grow up before Thee. Then shall we declare the Name of the Lord in Sion, and his Praise in Jerusalem.

FINIS.